

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A distribution management device comprising:

means for receiving via a network first order information of merchandise and second order information of said merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

means for generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on the first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order information;

means for storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise, and a transportation delay time indicating a time required to transport the second quantity of merchandise from a manufacturing factory to a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request;

means for deleting ~~a portion of,~~ from the generated stock control information, ~~corresponding to~~ a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock

control information ~~excluding old product information~~, when a current date is within a ~~predetermined number of days before~~ the transportation delay time of the debut date; and

means for instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at ~~a~~ the point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for instructing instructs the supplier to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to a sales debut of the new product during the predetermined number of days before the debut date.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 4 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A distribution management method comprising ~~steps~~
~~of~~:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order information;

storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise, and a transportation delay time indicating a time required to transport the second quantity of merchandise from a manufacturing factory to a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request;

deleting ~~a portion of~~, from the generated stock control information, ~~corresponding to~~ a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information ~~excluding old product information~~, when a current date is within ~~a predetermined number of days before~~ the transportation delay time of the debut date; and

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at ~~a~~the point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said instructing instructs the supplier of said merchandise to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to new product sales during the predetermined number of days before the debut date of the new product.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 9 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving said first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on the Internet.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A program storage medium for making a distribution management device execute a program comprising ~~steps of~~:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order information;

storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise, and a transportation delay time indicating a time required to transport the second quantity of merchandise from a manufacturing factory to a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request;

deleting ~~a portion of, from~~ the generated stock control information, ~~corresponding to a~~ quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information ~~excluding old product information,~~ when a current date is within ~~a predetermined number of days before~~ the transportation delay time of the debut date; and

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information from

which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at ~~a~~the point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said instructing instructs the supplier of the merchandise to stop supplying the old product in said merchandise due to new product sales.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via Internet as the network.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 14 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A distribution management system comprising:
a first order information forming device for forming first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel based on a first purchase request received from a first purchaser via a network;

a second order information forming device for forming second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased in a second sales channel based on a second purchase request received from a second purchaser via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use said network to receive the second purchase request from the second purchaser;

a distribution management device configured to receive the first and the second order information from the first and the second order information forming devices via said network, and generate stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel; and

the distribution management device further configured to store information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise, and a transportation delay time indicating a time required to transport the second quantity of merchandise from a manufacturing factory to a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request;

the distribution management device further configured to delete ~~a portion of~~ from the generated stock control information, ~~corresponding to~~ a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information ~~excluding old product information,~~ when a current date is within ~~a predetermined number of days before~~ the transportation delay time of the debut date; and

said distribution management device further configured to instruct a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information from which was deleted the quantity of the

old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at ~~a~~the point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to instruct the supplier to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to a new product sales during the predetermined number of days before the debut date of the new product.

Claim 18 (Canceled).

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information transmitted from the first and the second order information forming devices via the Internet as the network.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 19 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be utilized in a World Wide Web service on the Internet transmitted from said first and the second order information forming devices.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

means for generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

the means for instructing instructs the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6, further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium of claim 11, wherein the distribution management device executes the program further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16, wherein the distribution management device is further configured to receive an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location,

generate updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged, and

instruct the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A distribution management system comprising:
a first sales channel configured to receive a first purchase request from a first purchaser via a network;

a second sales channel configured to receive a second purchase request from a second purchaser at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request from the second purchaser;

a first order information forming device configured to form first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel based on the first purchase request received from the first purchaser via the first sales channel;

a second order information forming device configured to form second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel based on the second purchase request received from the second purchaser via the second sales channel;

a distribution management device configured to receive the first and the second order information from the first and the second order information forming devices via said network, and generate stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel;

the distribution management device further configured to store information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise, and a transportation delay time indicating a time required to transport the second quantity of merchandise from a manufacturing factory to a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request;

the distribution management device further configured to delete ~~a portion of~~, from the generated stock control information, ~~corresponding to~~ a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information ~~excluding old product information,~~ when a current date is within ~~a predetermined number of days before~~ the transportation delay time of the debut date; and

a module, at said distribution management device, configured to instruct a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at ~~a~~the point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request.